

# Air Education and Training Command

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*Replenishing the Combat Capability of America's Air Force*



United States Air Force  
Enlisted Heritage

CMSgt (Ret) Joe  
Wallace

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*Integrity - Service - Excellence*



# Overview



- **Introduction**
- **Heritage and culture**
- **USAF enlisted heritage/culture**
- **Implementing/supporting enlisted heritage/culture--application**
- **Summary and Closing Comments**



# Introduction





# Introduction



- We know—when compared to other military departments—that our heritage is not as dated—only going back 50+ years—but our enlisted corps does possess a proud heritage
- This presentation is to heighten the exploits and capture facts regarding the USAF's enlisted corps's heritage
- We're going to take an hour and look at our heritage from a cultural perspective. Meaning—looking at this from a military society



# Heritage and Culture



- Define “Heritage”



# Heritage and Culture

- Definition of “Heritage”

“Something passed down from preceding generations; legacy, traditions”

American Heritage Dictionary

Meaning, “heritage” is what we inherit from past generations



# Heritage and Culture

- Define “Culture”



# Heritage and Culture



- Definition of “Culture”

“the totality of socially transmitted behavior patterns, art, beliefs, institutions, and all other products of human work and thought characteristic of a community or populations”

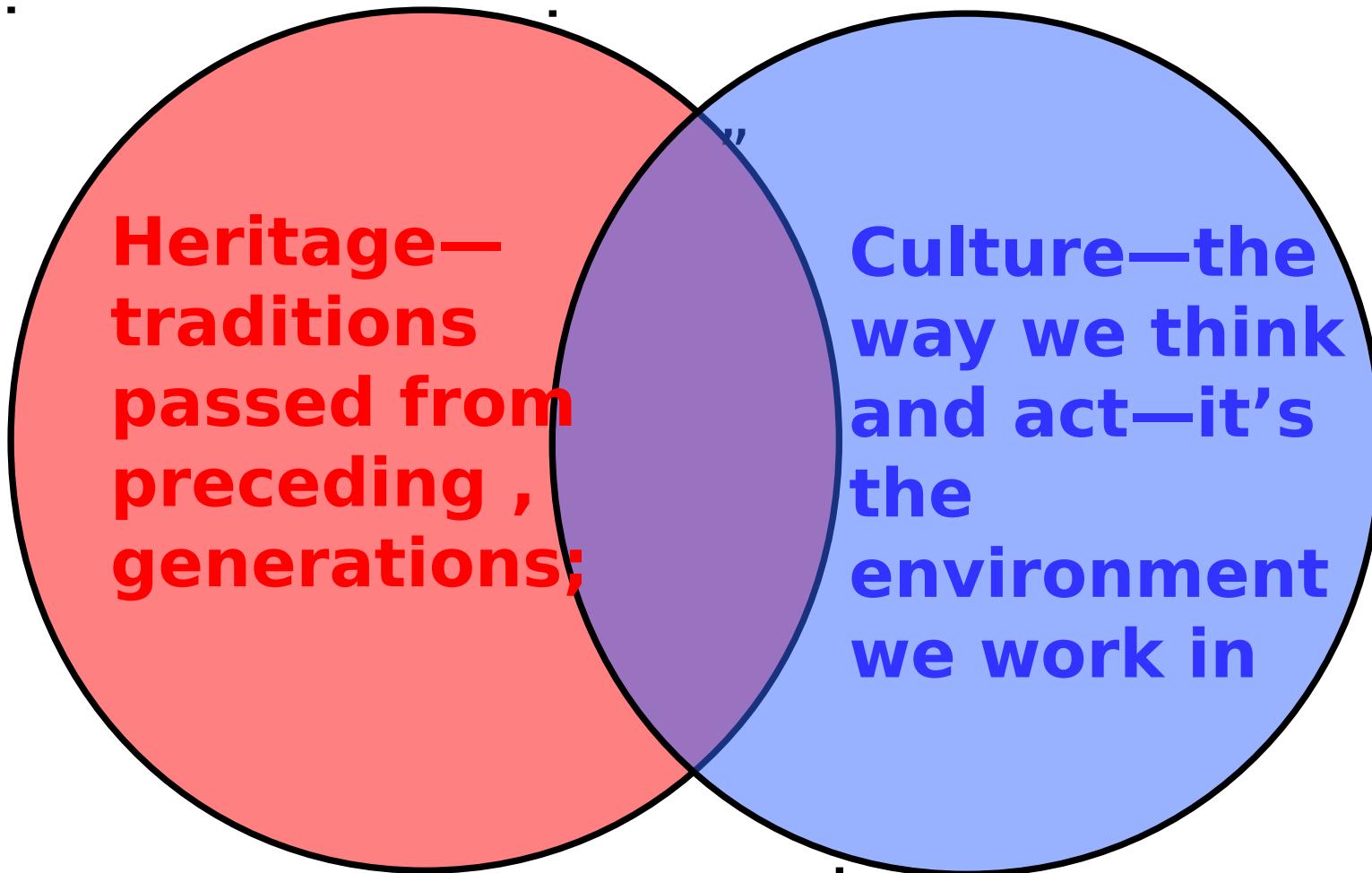
American Heritage Dictionary

Lt Col James Smith wrote “every organization has a culture that is a persistent, patterned way of thinking about the central task of human relationships within the organization”



# Heritage and Culture

- So heritage and culture come together





# Enlisted History



## Beginnings to WWII

- Balloonists in Civil war were denied military rank
- Sgt Baldwin in charge of all upkeep and training for 1<sup>st</sup> military balloon—employed during Spanish-American war
- 1<sup>st</sup> Aero squadron—in NM for Poncho Villa—learned lessons of maintainability—enlisted troops overcame all challenges



# Enlisted History



## Beginnings to WWII

- Air Service grows from 1,200 to 200,000 for WWI
- Support roles dominated the enlisted corp—when recruiting failed to find persons for these high tech jobs—the army tested its infantry (and other ) personnel to find suitable fills
- After the war selection of enlisted members came to the front—alpha test, aptitude test, and high school equivalency test became standard
- Technical training started at Chanute—commanders wanted technical skills—not military preparedness



# Enlisted History

## Beginnings to WWII

During WWII—due to the demand for technical-based manpower- tech training was centralized and standardized

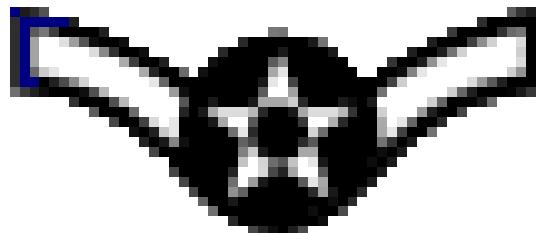




# Enlisted History

## Evolution to USAF

- Rank system remained unchanged until 1952
- New stripes sewed on “army” uniforms until mid 50’s
- Enlisted ranks top heavy





# Enlisted History

## Evolution to USAF

- USAF has always advocated an enlisted force with a high % of senior NCOs (top heavy)
- USAF formalized this program 45/55 in early 60's
- USAF developed programs for 45/55
  - Airman Career Program—classification sys. (AFS vs. MOS)
  - Weighted Airman Promotion Sys. (WAPS) centralized promo
  - TOPCAP—"up or out" program for "Korean hump"



# Enlisted History

## Evolution to USAF

- Enlisted corps “professionalized” by PMEs in 1950’s
- In 1953 NCOs tasked to write regulation on NCO responsibilities
- MAJCOMs also drafted instructions regarding NCO duties and privileges
  - Scott AFB—exempted from mundane duties, NCO only tables and could cash checks with officer’s endorsement
  - SRNCOs took over jobs held by officers



# Enlisted History

## Enlisted Establishment

- SMSgt and CMSgt grades
  - 1958 authorized 2 new pay grades (E-8 and E-9)





# Enlisted History

## Enlisted Establishment

- Senior Enlisted Advisors (SEA) and Command Chief
- Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force
  - In 1966 Congressman Rivers introduced a bill that would mandate each service appoint a senior enlisted rep
  - Bill never past but support put CMSgt Paul Airey as the first CMSAF in April 1967
  - Counting CMSgt Airey and our current CMSAF, Gerald Murray, there have been 14 CMSAFs





# Enlisted History

## Enlisted Milestones/Educational Programs

- Ms. Easter Blake was the first female to enlist in the USAF—8 July 1948
- CMSgt Grace Peterson—
  - Entered WAAC in 1942
  - On 1 June 1960 she became the first female to wear CMSgt Stripes
  - Highest ranking female to retire from WAF in 1963
- CCAF—started 1972, world's largest community college—only one in DoD (243,000 degrees)
- CEPME—ALS, NCOA, the SRNCOA and the AFEHRI



# Enlisted Medal of Honor Recipients



- The Medal of Honor is the highest US military decoration and is awarded to service members *who distinguished themselves by conspicuous gallantry and courage at the risk of life, above and beyond the call of duty* (started in 1861)
- Army Air Corps recipients for WWII
  - Sgt Maynard Smith—manned waist guns and did 1<sup>st</sup> aid
  - TSgt Forrest Vosler—wounded tailgunner, rescue of crew
  - **SSgt Archibald Mathies**—crashed while piloting B-17
  - SSgt Henry Erwin—burned getting flare to window (B29)
- USAF recipients from Vietnam
  - **A1C William Pitsenbarger**, Pararescue-killed in firefight
  - A1C John Levitow, threw himself on burning flares





# Enlisted Air Force Cross Recipients



- The Air Force Cross is awarded to US and foreign civilians and service members *who displayed extraordinary heroism while engaged in military operations by a) declared war or b) situation where USAF is supporting allies*
- Here are 22 USAF enlisted recipients (1 upgraded to CMH)

A1C William Robinson  
**Eugene Clay**

A2C Duane Hackney\*  
**Maysey**

**CMSgt Etchberger** Sgt Nacey Kent Jr. Sgt Thomas Newman

A1C Joel E. Talley TSgt Victor Adams **A1C Charles King**

Sgt Michael Fish TSgt Donald Smith Sgt Theo Gamlin

TSgt Leory Wright SSgt Charles Shaub Sgt Charles McGrath

SSgt Jon Harston TSgt Tim Wilkinson **SrA J Cunningham**

Sgt Charles King TSgt John Chapman

**SSgt**

A1C Arthur Black  
Sgt Russell Hunt **Sgt Larry**



# Questions

- 1. What is the primary difference in our USAF culture when compared to other services?**
- 2. How do we educate our airman on cultural matters?**
- 3. What effect does “QOL” matters have on our culture?**
- 4. What role does education—both professional and academic—have in our culture?**



# Summary and Closing Comments



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***I n t e g r i t y - S e r v i c e - E x c e l l e n c e***